

Nevada, Mr. REID, and the Senator from California for the condolences and well wishes they have offered.

Yesterday, the parents in Jefferson County, CO, said goodbye to their children on their way to school as they have done on countless mornings, and as I have done, and as you have also done as a parent over the years. But for some, that goodbye must now be their final farewell. As a parent and grandparent and the husband of a person who taught school for over 10 years, I can't imagine the agony those families are feeling this morning. Today, my whole State is paralyzed with grief, as you might know.

Hundreds of families in Colorado endured a life-or-death lottery—knowing students at Columbine High School were dead, but not knowing if their youngsters were among those killed. It is tragic that on Earth Day the remains of those students will be returned to the Earth while their souls go to heaven.

The community of Littleton is a very nice town. I visit there often. Mr. President, Columbine High School is a fine school, with a fine staff, a good curriculum and nice youngsters. It has no history of racial violence or gang trouble or anything of that nature. It was not a school you would ever expect something like this to happen in. Certainly, there is a story in that and a tragedy. For those families, there will be no more hurried breakfasts, no more arguments over curfews when they send the youngsters to school, no more report cards, no more money for trips to the malls, and no more plans for after they leave high school.

What really frightens me is that, despite our best intentions to prevent this from happening, these horrors find a way to continue. In fact, Colorado has had a law on the books since 1994 that prevents any weapons from going into a public school. But they still do. With a gun, a bomb, a knife, a club, or whatever, young people are using violence as a way to resolve disagreements.

I don't know how we got there. Perhaps nobody does. I can remember the days when young people decided it was OK to have disagreements in the streets and they might have fist fights after school, or drag races, things of that nature. Those means were not right or acceptable, but those days are long gone. Now, too often they tend to kill their way to solutions. The disputes in those days were between two individuals, and they ended up shaking hands. Somebody lost and somebody won. In those days, we all lived through it. Now, all too often some of the parties to a conflict lose their lives. I don't know when we traded pugilism for pipe bombs. Frankly, I don't think they have found all the bombs at Littleton High School. They are still searching.

In fact, one went off at 2 o'clock this morning.

I don't know when these youngsters got accustomed to killing each other.

But I know we often blame television, we blame movies, we blame video games, and we blame a number of other things.

But those children in Jefferson County and their families ache every day. I just wanted to tell the people of Colorado that my colleagues, Senator WYDEN, Senator FEINSTEIN, Senator REID, Senator LAUTENBERG, and a number of others have all offered their sympathies, and want people in Colorado to know that our hearts in the United States Senate are with all of the families through this terrible and tragic time.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. MCCONNELL and Mr. LIEBERMAN pertaining to the introduction of S. 846 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, in his capacity as a Senator from the State of New Hampshire, suggests the absence of a quorum.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURNS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Ms. Angela Ewell-Madison, Mr. Sean McCluskie, and Mr. Jordan Coyle of my staff be afforded privileges of the floor during the duration of my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. President.

#### BUDGET REFORM

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I prepared these remarks yesterday in anticipation that we would be debating the budget reform bill today. It is my understanding that subsequent to yesterday's offering of an amendment, which was referred to as the lockbox amendment, in lieu of the budget reform bill, that now the budget reform bill has been withdrawn.

But anticipating that that is a relatively temporary step, because we cannot avoid having to deal with the issues of budget reform if we are serious about our goal of preserving the momentum that is currently underway

towards a surplus in the Federal Government fiscal accounts, I offer some comments today which I hope will be useful as we prepare for that return to the budget reform discussion.

I am very pleased that we are focusing on this issue, because it is an indication of our commitment to retain the fiscal discipline that has gotten us to the point where we have the opportunity to talk about a Federal budget surplus and how it should be appropriately used.

I want to discuss two interrelated issues. One I will call the issue of the "vault": How will we protect the surplus that we have once it has been attained? But the even more significant predicate issue is, How do we achieve the surplus?

I am concerned by some of the actions that were taken in 1998 which indicate a lack of resolve to protect the surplus. It is no good to have the securest vault in the bank possible if we fritter away the money we would like to place in that vault. If we do not address the underlying issues of fiscal discipline, responsibility, the Social Security trust fund will be endangered no matter how strong our lockbox is to protect it.

This Congress is in a unique position to reaffirm the stated commitment to fiscal discipline and to cure the previous willingness of Congresses to undermine that discipline through budget trickery.

As recently as 1993, the Federal budget deficit was at a record high of \$290 billion. Last year, we learned that 5 years of effort, fiscal austerity, and a strong economy had transformed that staggering deficit into the first budget surplus in more than a generation. While we celebrated that success—it was a cause for celebration—it did not give Congress carte blanche authority to return to its spendthrift ways of the past. Especially daunting was the reality that 100 percent of the surplus was the result of surpluses in the Social Security trust fund.

We have a responsibility to our current generation, as well as to their children and grandchildren, to save that extra money until Social Security's long-term solvency is assured. Unfortunately, the 105th Congress stumbled in its commitment to that goal. Though it resisted a proposal to spend surplus funds on a catch-all omnibus list of tax cuts, and it similarly rejected suggestions that the surplus could be used for increased spending, it did not exercise similar good judgment during the end-of-the-year rush to adjourn. The same Congress that claimed to be saving the surplus for Social Security participated in raids on that same surplus through the back door.

In the waning hours of last year's budget negotiations, we passed a \$532 billion omnibus appropriations bill. Inserted in that \$532 billion spending bill was \$21.4 billion of so-called emergency spending. As we know, the fact that that \$21.4 billion was designated as an